

[**Elle** by kirabook](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Gen, siblings 5ever

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Will Byers

Relationships: Will Byers & Eleven | Jane Hopper

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Summary:

“.... I messed up again.” Despite how much time passed, she almost always wrote ‘11’ first.

Elle

El stressed over the drawing, sighing as the painting got worse and worse. This is the first time she used Will's paint, but her skills weren't up to par.

"Looking great." Will leaned toward her until their shoulders touched. His eyes scanned over her picture but his expression concealed any true opinion he may have. She wanted to paint a dog, but the monstrosity on the paper did not resemble one.

"You lie." She huffed. El grabbed the paper and crumpled it like the dozens of other she threw in the trash that day. This time, Will's hand wrapped around her wrist before the paper wrinkled too badly.

"Hey, you said you'd keep this one even if you didn't like it, right?" With his free hand, Will plucked the paper from her grip and straighten it as best he could without touching the wet paint.

"It's terrible. I don't want this one."

"Even if it's terrible, keep it."

"Why?"

Will smiled and held up the painting. "So, you think it's awful?"

"It's bad." She affirmed.

"What if someone else likes your work?" By her estimation, Hopper and Joyce would love her painting. Mike too. Despite how bad it looked, they would insist it wasn't just like Will. El shook her head.

"It's still terrible."

"Ok... well.. Are you going to give up painting because this one painting is bad?"

El hesitated. Even though the dog didn't look like a dog, it didn't mean she didn't want to try again. She wanted to keep trying until she painted a real dog or whatever else she wanted to draw.

“... No.”

“Then keep this one.”

“... Why?” She demanded. “You didn’t say why.”

“Because,” Will started in a matter-of-fact way. He got up from his chair and searched his desk for a pen. “This is where it all starts. Someday, you’ll be much better. You can see your old stuff and realize how you improved. I have a bunch of bad drawings too, but I keep all of them so I can see I’m getting better.”

“Oh...” That made sense to her even if she didn’t want to keep the painting. Will placed her painting in front of her and slid the pen into her hand. He returned to his seat next to her.

“Sign and add a date, that’s important too.”

“Sign the paper?”

“Yeah.” Will glanced at his own painting. He also drew a dog, an armor plated warrior dog that carried weapons in his mouth. He tried to make an old medieval portrait painting, but it didn’t work. “When you sign and add a date, you know it’s yours and when you drew it.” Will borrowed the pen he gave her and wrote the date and his name. Will always signed with ‘*Will the Wise*’, but subtitled ‘*Will Byers*’.

When finished, El took the pen back and figured out where she wanted to sign. Will put his in the corner, so she chose a corner too. She dragged the pen on the paper twice, then froze.

“.... I messed up again.” Despite how much time passed, she almost always wrote ‘11’ first. In public she went by Jane. At home, she preferred El. Why was 11 the first name to come to mind? 11, which she couldn’t fix to say Jane or El.

Again, El grabbed the painting to crumble it for good, but as always, Will stopped her.

“Wait,” he insisted.

“It’s all messed up,” she pleaded. “I don’t want it.”

“... Can I try to fix it first?” He asked, meeting her eyes.

“Fix it?” How? She wanted to say no, but her resolve faded quickly. Even though she hated it, she trusted Will to make it better somehow. Will took the pen and spun the painting his direction.

Will added two letters. Only two

The whole word changed.

‘Elle.’

“You can write your name this way... don’t think we’ve ever spelled out your nickname, huh?” Will studied her, wondering if she found the modification acceptable. El’s eyes widened and flickered between his eyes and her name.

Finally, she took the painting, still taken by revised spelling.

“This is how you spell it?”

“One way, yeah. Or, E-l-l-e. Or just E-l. You can have two nicknames, your choice.” El smiled and wrapped an arm around his shoulders in a one-armed hug. Will returned the gesture and patted her reassuring on the back. He knows she likes doodling and drawing, he’d do anything to keep her interested in her new hobbies, especially art.

No one else in the Party had the patience to quietly sit with him with only the sounds of brushing paper to keep them company. Spending time with her reminded Will of being with Jonathan on photography sprees or watching him set up a scene to photograph. Maybe drawing and painting wouldn’t be her thing like photography wasn’t his, but in the meantime, things were ok as they were.

“This one is cool.” El concluded after a long pause, content.

Author's Note:

I could’ve SWORN someone sent me an ask saying Will would spell her name like this, but I can’t find it. 8c I’ve had this idea cooking for a while now.

Not sure if it's part of my fic series yet